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THE  
JUNIOR  
SCHOOL



## 1

THE SOCIAL SETTING OF THE JUNIOR  
SCHOOL

The children of our day are born into a different heritage from those of seventy years ago. This heritage includes a changed outlook in education. At the time when the compulsory system of education was introduced into this country, it was accepted that the responsibility of the community, acting through the State, was to produce a literate nation. The aims of the Schools were in the main confined to instruction in the three R's, Reading, Writing and Arithmetic. Routine repetitive exercises in the learning of these skills formed the main content of the curriculum from five to eleven years. Since that time our thinking and our practice have modified considerably this conception of education.

The new outlook has been brought about by the application to education of study of psychology and the social sciences, and can be summed up in the phrase, "Education in and for the community". During the past thirty years we have learned much concerning child-development. Progressive educationists of ten, twenty and thirty years ago recognised that the understanding of the child's needs should determine the content of the curriculum. "Child-centred education" was the key-word in the schools. A recent book on American education, "The Changing Curriculum," uses a different phrase, "Social-centred education," meaning that the development of children must be considered within the framework of the community, and that the needs of each are reciprocal. The researches of the social anthropologist in his study of the community have made us aware of this fact.

It is a far cry from the primitive society to the complex industrial civilisation of to-day. The vast majority of our



children are born within the industrial conglomeration of the cities and towns we know only too well. Yet the investigations of our own time have revealed the basic significance for social living of the primary groupings of men into families and neighbourhoods. Here is to be found the social heritage of children who are brought up within their homes and neighbourhoods, and involved in daily contact, not only with their own contemporaries in age, but with elderly or middle-aged people with babies. This is where the resident institution that caters exclusively for one age-group fails the child.

The radical importance of normal social relationships in homes and neighbourhoods has been recognised by the town-planners of to-day. Thus we find Lewis Mumford in "The Culture of Cities" defining the reconstruction of cities in terms of neighbourhood units, each of which requires a Junior School. The County of London plan is based explicitly on this idea of neighbourhood units. The old villages of Deptford, Shoreditch, Bethnal Green, for example, are the units of the reconstructed neighbourhood, and each one has its Nursery, Infant and Junior School, sometimes in one building and sometimes separate. The schools are so situated within the neighbourhood that there is no crossing of a main road for the children going to and from school.

The time is ripe for Junior School teachers to understand that the centre of the children's lives is the home, and that the aim of the school should be to integrate the experience of home, neighbourhood and school. It is therefore essential for Junior School teachers to know the children's homes and parents. Mothers and fathers should on their part feel a deep concern and interest in all that goes on in the school. In the planned neighbourhood of the future, the Junior School will be a growing point in the educational interest of the parents. When there is such community of interest between parents and teachers, a Parent-Teacher Association will have become

unnecessary. Parents will be willing to learn from teachers all they can give them for the better understanding and guidance of their children, and the teachers will be willing to learn from parents all that will help in developing and training the abilities of their children in school. There will be frequent opportunities for parents to take part in school activities and to mix easily with teachers and children within the school building. We see a very important function for the Junior School in helping to educate the parents of the future. The work and life of the neighbourhood apart from home and school will also be a source of educational experience for the children.

The present transitional period of social reconstruction calls for buildings which can be added to or re-shaped according to the changing needs of the neighbourhood. Children who cannot take part in a normal way in a domestic or family group, for example, those who are orphans, those whose homes are disrupted and those who are maladjusted to their own homes, should be brought up in a resident community run by a properly trained staff. In the opinion of some people all parents should be given the choice of sending their children to a school, residential if necessary, in a locality other than that of their own homes. These schools should become part of the neighbourhood unit, the children attending their local Junior School.

## 2

### THE AGE RANGE, SIZE OF SCHOOL AND SIZE OF CLASSES

The Age Range of the Junior School has been established by the Authorities as seven to eleven plus years. There are serious misgivings in various quarters about this range. Many consider that seven plus to eight years would be a more suitable



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age at which to start in the Junior School, and many would like to see the move to a post-Junior School at twelve plus for girls and thirteen plus for boys. Our opinion is that seven plus to twelve plus is the best approximate age range, with the understanding that the transfer should be based not on purely chronological age but on the stage of development of the individual child as shown by cumulative records.

In order that the Junior School may be a community in which the child can realise and play his part as an active member, the size of the school is an important consideration. The over-large school is unsuitable for this age. Between 200 and 300 children seems a suitable size where practicable.

We look forward to the time when the size of classes in all schools will be not larger than twenty-five children and as an immediate policy we recommend that within five years there should be at least one teacher to every class of this size in all Junior Schools.

### 3

#### THE LINK WITH THE PRE-JUNIOR AND POST-JUNIOR SCHOOLS

Before entering the Junior School at seven or eight plus children will have had at least two years at school, the age of compulsory attendance being five years. Some may have had longer than this at a Nursery School. Here they will have had opportunities for physical activities and will have acquired good physical habits and some degree of self-reliance. Through their own direct experience and experiment they will have some first-hand knowledge of their immediate environment, and much of their activity will have developed from free and imaginative play in a comparatively informal atmosphere.

"The Infant School has no business with uniform standard of attainment. Its business is to see that children in the Infant

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School stage grow in body and in mind at their natural rate, neither faster nor slower, and if it performs its business properly there will be as much variety of attainment as there is intellectual ability. The only uniformity at which the infant school should aim is that every child at the end of the course should have acquired the power to attack new work and feel a zest in doing so".<sup>(1)</sup>

The Junior School must take on from here with no abrupt change. It is change enough for the child to find himself in new surroundings with a new teacher. So far as possible the material on which he has to work should be familiar and the day's programme only slightly modified from that of the Nursery School. There should be time given for free play, much physical activity and self-chosen occupations. The training in good physical and social habits should be continued. Gradually through the first year in the Junior School the work will assume the more typical Junior School form as set out below in the chapter on Curriculum.

It is important to arrange that groups of children and staff should visit pre-Junior and post-Junior Schools for particular purposes such as Entertainments and Exhibitions in order to promote mutual understanding and co-operation. Where it is possible to have all types of school built on the same spacious grounds it will be more easy to establish the link between them.

### 4

#### THE CURRICULUM OF THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

While much investigation has been done on the infant stage and on the adolescent, the intervening period has had much less attention. Educational practice, following slowly, it may

<sup>(1)</sup> Infant and Nursery Report, paragraph 105.



be, the facts revealed by investigation, is on the way to meeting the needs of the infant and adolescent, but, "Instead of the Junior Schools performing their proper and highly important function of fostering the potentialities of children at an age when their minds are nimble and receptive, their curiosity strong, their imagination fertile, and their spirits high, the curriculum is too often cramped and distorted by over-emphasis on examination subjects and on ways and means of defeating the examiners"(2).

In part also the comparative distortion and neglect of the Junior stage may be due in some measure to the characteristics of the child at this stage, and the piteously mistaken view which has been taken of them. The difficulties which are apparent at the second dentition are over and those connected with puberty have not yet been reached. It is a time of slow, steady growth and of comparative stability for most children. This factor, together with their recognised susceptibility to "suggestion" makes the child somewhat easier to "manage" than his younger or older brothers and sisters, and less obviously rebellious under misguided treatment. Nevertheless this "latency" period is one of paramount importance. For it is then that a child with his sensory capacities at their optimum is full of energy and eagerness; it is at this time, as at no other, that this energy and capacity can be harnessed to constructive ends and both his innate desires and his attitude to all that surrounds him can be set in the direction which will lead to his fullest development.

"At this age when they attend the primary schools, children are active and inquisitive, delighting in movement, in small tasks that they can perform with deftness and skill and in the sense of visible and tangible accomplishment which such tasks offer; intensely interested in the character and purpose—the shape, form, colour, and use—of the material

(2) White Paper on Educational Reconstruction, Bd. of Ed. 1943, Paragraph 17.

objects around them; at once absorbed in creating their own miniature world of imagination and emotion, and keen observers who take pleasure in reproducing their observations by speech and dramatic action; and still engaged in mastering a difficult and unfamiliar language, without knowing that they are doing so, because it is a means of communicating with other human beings. These activities are not aimless, but form the process by which children grow. They are in a very real sense, their education."(3)

It is essential to build the curriculum on the basis of these activities for only on such a foundation can a child gain his full stature and his stability. This new and right approach to the problem is well stated in the "Report on the Primary School" as the following quotations show.

"Curriculum is to be thought of in terms of experience rather than of knowledge to be gained and facts to be stored."(4)

"Teaching by subjects is a mode of instruction which, though it may be appropriate for older boys and girls, who have themselves developed specialised interests and who are ready to follow the major intellectual pursuits of mankind along the lines of their logical development, does not always correspond with the child's unsystematised but eager interest in the people and things of a world still new to him."(5) Children at this age are full of curiosity and enthusiasm; these interests are active and practical, therefore "the school subjects should not be isolated and labelled in separate compartments of the time-table, but should be treated in close relation to the child's concrete experience."(6)

Whatever the method employed, be it project, centre of interest or group activity, it should be a method which

(3) "Report on the Primary School," Introduction, page xvii.

(4) "Report on the Primary School," Chapter vii, paragraph 75.

(5) "Report on the Primary School," Chapter vii, paragraph 83.

(6) "Report on the Primary School," Chapter iii, paragraph 41.



integrates the work, while it makes the fullest use of every opportunity for learning, and for training the individual child. This should not mean that the various skills or studies are dragged in for the sake of apparent integration. One interest will only combine a limited sphere of skills and types of factual knowledge. There will also be the necessity to provide time and opportunity for other work, for example, periods for individuals to practise the tool subjects, time and place for work in the æsthetics.

The organisation of work on these lines necessitates the consideration and use of children's interests to develop their physical and mental skill, to develop their powers of appreciation in the creative and æsthetic work such as drama, art, music, literature, and to increase their knowledge through environmental and other studies to which their natural curiosity leads them.

Below is an outline of activities to be provided in School, and for clarity and convenience they have been described under generally accepted terms; in practice the various activities are integrated by the children's own interests.

#### I. PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Looking forward as we do to a Junior School in which all activities are integrated, the physical activity will be a component of all the work, whether it be exploration of the environment or expression on the æsthetic side—in addition there should be ample opportunities for the following:—

Free Play.—After a good home or good nursery school where suitable equipment is usually provided out of doors, the asphalt playground used for "break" is inadequate. There should be opportunities for climbing, swinging, jumping, paddling, with use of jungle gyms, swings, trees, see-saws, and sand. Such things challenge not only physical prowess but physical courage, and allow for their legitimate

use instead of, as is so often the case at present, illegitimate climbing on walls, outbuildings, etc., both in and out of school hours. Physical training and games are already recommended by the Board of Education Syllabus. Towards the end of the Primary period children welcome organised team games such as netball, football, cricket, but it is a mistake to introduce them too early.

Music and Movement.—The appeal of rhythm is innate, and in order to gain a sensitive control, children should have the chance to express their own rhythms in free movements which are later accompanied by music. This leads on, in its turn, to a response to rhythm, and so to dancing. It involves that kind of sensitiveness which Plato spoke of as eurhythmic and valued highly because, though expressed in bodily bearing and movement, spiritual elements of deep importance were implicated in it and it was likely to run out into expressions of a man's nature in his work. Dancing is the chief means of cultivating it—provided that the dances do not aim at a cheap and superficial "gracefulness" but are, like many of the old English country dances, full of æsthetic quality as genuine as it is delightful and not only linked with but expressive of simple and beautiful music."<sup>(7)</sup>

#### 2. BIOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES:

##### Exploration of Environment

It is imperative that the child should begin to explore and understand his physical environment and the community in which he lives in order that he may appreciate and become able to use and build on his biological and social heritage. This necessitates exploring the immediate neighbourhood with the co-operation of its inhabitants. The children should be taken out into the community and the community should be brought into the school. The child should see the social

(7) "Report on the Primary School," chapter vii, paragraph 76.



skills and tools of living in practice, for example, in the rural areas, the processes of agriculture, in the urban areas, the production and refinement of commodities, and in all areas, the various ways in which each individual's work contributes to the well-being of the community.

The simpler manual skills he can appreciate for himself and will want to practise for his own purposes. There should be provision for gardening, carpentry and many other crafts. This experience in manual skills is essential not only for the development of manual dexterity and for improvement in sense perception. Working in concrete material also gives creative expression to ideas and provides a method of solving problems which is particularly important to children at this stage. For example, there is the mathematical element in carpentry, ear-training and evolution of melody in tuning and making bamboo pipes, the biological and physical knowledge involved in caring for a garden.

Every child needs to find himself in and among natural phenomena. Nature herself is the fundamental influence. In town life this fact is obscured ; nevertheless the children's curiosity about the animate world needs satisfying. Children's interest is stronger towards animal than towards plant life, and it changes gradually from being satisfied by a knowledge of form and habit to wanting to know more of function. They need to live with living creatures, both plant and animal. Specimens produced for a short time for observation and inference are not enough. They need to see the seasonal changes and the shorter life histories take place under their eyes. Only this will keep alive the sense of wonder, imbue them with humility of mind, and engender the beginning of the philosophic outlook which comes from the gradual acceptance of the facts of birth, change, maturity and death. Gardening provides at once such opportunities for physical exercise, manual skill and biological knowledge that it

cannot be left out of the curriculum without great loss. Work on the garden also provides an opportunity for gaining a knowledge of weather, soils and drainage which gives the background for understanding the use to which the community puts the land.

It is on this biological foundation that sex education can best be based, but the child cannot be expected to carry over for himself knowledge of physical facts from the higher animals to human beings. By the end of the Junior School period and so before puberty, children should have learned the physical facts of sex. It is extremely unlikely that in a properly free and friendly group, where the children's questions are discussed and their reading is given wide range, children will not have asked what they want to know. Health education begun in the Nursery and Infants' School to cover general social behaviour and habits of cleanliness and punctuality in eating, changing of clothes, excretion, and so on, should be continued at this stage.

### 3. THE ÆSTHETIC AND CREATIVE WORK

Creative work by the child has already been practically, if implicitly, dealt with in what has been said. Moreover, beyond the mere necessities of life, each community practises its own particular contribution on the æsthetic side, of which it is hoped the child will gradually become aware and to which in time he will be a contributor.

It is a common observation that children respond to rhythm in all its forms — movement, music, verse and colour ; there are few who do not spontaneously scribble and then draw, gradually evolving symbol and form. Such media as sand and clay incite them to model. Acting grows naturally out of their imitative play. It is on those spontaneous beginnings that we should build so that children find a means of self-expression with its health-giving emotional outlet,



and also come to appreciate and delight in the expression of the masters of these media. Music should be linked with dancing and should include singing, percussion band, and opportunities for music making. There should also be ample opportunity for listening to music. If such training is to be effective, there must be careful selection of works presented, and the length of time for listening should be short at first, gradually lengthening as their capacity to listen grows, care being taken to explain the use of various instruments and the forms of music.

Patterns, pictures and models give children an outlet for their ideas and emotions. At first, such ideas are usually in abbreviated or symbolic form, not necessarily closely related in colour or form to realistic representation. In order that spontaneity of expression may not be lost or hampered it is imperative that suitable criteria be used in judging children's work—the criteria which will help them to fuller satisfaction and engender an attitude of "loving kindness" towards their work which impels the child to spare no pains in its production. When a child feels unable to express himself, then is the time to give technical help. Children enjoy pictures, and, once their interest is aroused, appreciate not only their content but also the way in which the idea is expressed. They should have opportunities of seeing good reproductions and originals. Schools can borrow good pictures on loan, and visits to Museums and Art Galleries can be paid.

Children also need to be trained to listen to the radio, and to see and hear the cinema film and sound track in order that they may both appreciate and criticise these mechanical aids to knowledge. In the society of the future, the radio and the cinema will be so powerful and important that children must be educated in their proper use.

Throughout his life the fortunate individual assimilates

some part of our traditional literature. Children are ever ready for the story, here is the chance to hand on to them traditional tales and verse. The skill of the good raconteur is highly appreciated and it is surprising how almost unconsciously the child values the *bon mot* and will repeat those that satisfy his verbal sensibility. Such enjoyments will send him to books for himself. With suitable help he will learn to read for pleasure, and it is therefore important that there should be available a library of fact and fiction catering for the varying taste of individuals.

Almost all children love to imitate and to act. Such expression engages the whole individual, including as it does, movement, gesture and speech; it affords not only free expression of ideas but gives opportunities for physical control, social co-operation and training in good speech habits. Spontaneous, sincere characterisation is more important at this stage than the adult interpretation.

#### 4. THE FORMAL TOOLS OF LEARNING

Beyond the manual skills referred to above, the formal tools of learning language, oral and written, reading, and arithmetic are part of the social heritage. They are part and parcel of all that the child does in gaining and expressing his knowledge.

The paramount importance of gaining command of the English language is obvious. The Junior School period is the time to lay the foundation of good habits of speech and writing, and of sound comprehension of the spoken and written word. While time needs to be set aside especially for the inculcation and practice of those habits and skills, it is impossible to isolate the teaching in periods. Throughout the day the child is using them and should be ever encouraged to use them well. He will only do so if he himself feels the need for words. Therefore the standard of English acquired



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depends in large measure on the vitality of the rest of the work. Only a live interest will give a driving purpose to planning and discussion, creating in children an urgent desire to make themselves intelligible to their fellows. The need to gain more knowledge than can be contributed by any of the group should send them to books of reference.

*Reading and Arithmetic.*—It is not easy to state a definite age by which these tools should be mastered. Experience shows that to insist on too high a standard at any early age in some cases destroys the child's interest in their use; the process has been so laborious that the purpose and content are lost. On the other hand, children derive great satisfaction and self-respect on the acquisition of these tool subjects, and a corresponding dissatisfaction and inferiority if they have not acquired them when the majority of their fellows have. It is therefore essential for children to have every opportunity to use and practise these skills for their own purposes, encouraged and helped by their teachers. Since success must depend on many individual factors the work in acquiring them must be along individual lines. Children should be allowed to work through graded schemes in arithmetic and reading at their own best rate. The theoretical work in arithmetic should be preceded by practical work and application in order that there may be an understanding of purpose and process. Wherever possible generalisation should be withheld until practical needs have shown its necessity.

The content of reading material should be intrinsically interesting to the individual reader and should be checked by one or other forms of comprehension.

#### 5. RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Christian values should be implicit in the whole life of the school. The study of Nature and the æsthetics inspire wonder

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and reverence. The school assembly is the occasion for their further expression and for dedication. There should be ample opportunity for the appreciation of those values which especially appeal to the child at this stage of his development, courage in action, endurance in adversity, love of adventure, the kindness and self-discipline which are needed for true co-operation. The attitude of the teacher in dealing with these is all-important. By his choice of story he can open the child's mind to goodness, beauty and truth. While there are many sources from which suitable stories may be drawn, the Old Testament and the Life of Christ provide, in the opinion of very many teachers, the indispensable foundation of religious knowledge and the noblest examples of the spiritual life. Such teaching is, however, valueless if it becomes formal or conventional.

In addition, we quote the reply which L. P. Jacks received to his question, "Where in your time-table do you teach Religion?" "We teach it all day long. We teach it in arithmetic by accuracy. We teach it in language by learning to say what we mean, 'yea, yea, and nay, nay'. We teach it in history by humanity, we teach it in geography by breadth of mind. We teach it in astronomy by reverence; we teach it in handicraft by thoroughness. We teach it in the playground by fair play. We teach it by kindness to animals, by good manners to one another and by truthfulness in all things. We teach it by showing the children that we, their elders, are their friends."<sup>(8)</sup> We would say further that we teach it by helping to establish a school community where the individual and social virtues are practical; that is, a community in which co-operation is the key-note; one in which children are able to give their maximum and at the same time learn to conform to the laws made by that community so that they may become members who are able

<sup>(8)</sup> From "A Living Universe," by L. P. Jacks, D.O., LL.D., D.Lit., Page 50.



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to live with their fellows. In such a community no child could grow up in ignorance of religion although the primary responsibility must rest with his parents and his home.

## 5

### INTERNAL ORGANISATION

TIME-TABLE. A flexible timetable, thought of in blocks of time rather than in half-hour periods, becomes a necessity if the curriculum outlined above is to be carried into effect.<sup>(9)</sup> In practice this implies that such work as the æsthetics, which may need specialised staff, place, and equipment, must be given at particular times. For the rest of the work the group teacher is left free to arrange the times with the proviso that a balance is kept between the various types of work and the major interests of the children. This leaves far more to the initiative of the teacher than formerly.

EXPEDITIONS AND VISITORS. The head master or mistress in co-operation with the staff should be permitted to make what arrangements seem necessary for children's expeditions, and for visits to the school by people whose experience and talent make it a privilege for the school to have them. Detailed records of such arrangements should be kept for inspection by the authorities. The success of the work done through expeditions depends largely on the class numbers not exceeding twenty-five children.

STAFFING. The head teachers of Junior Schools should be appointed from among people of enlightened experience and knowledge of children of this age. The form mistress or master should have charge of each class and be responsible for the general welfare and work of not more than twenty-five children. Beyond this all staff members so far as possible

<sup>(9)</sup> The representative of the P.N.E.U. could not accept this statement.

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should be able to undertake some form of specialised work, for example, art, music, or craft, but they should not spend so much time away from their own class that it detracts from their duties as form mistress or master. Staff with specialised ability and qualifications are necessary, not so much for specialised teaching, which should be reduced to the minimum in the Junior School, but to offer guidance to all, adults and children, on the standards of work which can be achieved and the principles underlying the work. The head teacher should be allowed enough time for administration and for co-ordinating the work of the school. This implies that he or she should not have charge of a class nor any over-heavy teaching programme. In addition to the teaching staff help should be provided on the secretarial and domestic side. It is particularly important that there should be some adult free who is capable of dealing with a sick child or with accidents.

SYLLABUSES should be used as a guide to the standards required by the end of the Junior School stage. These should be graded schemes of work in the tool subjects for children to work through at their own rate. The main objectives of training in the æsthetics may be made explicit. Each school should be left free to formulate detailed schemes which suit its particular environment and opportunities.

MEDICAL INSPECTION AND TREATMENT. Periodical and routine medical inspection should be continued in all schools and the co-operation of the parents encouraged in carrying out suggested treatments. For such treatment school clinics (general, orthopædic, dental, ophthalmic, speech and child guidance) should be made available for all children.

DOMESTIC ARRANGEMENTS. A hot midday meal at low cost should be provided at school for all children requiring it, and it is assumed that milk, subsidised as at present, will



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continue to be provided. Those in charge of the domestic arrangements, i.e., caretaking, catering and cleaning, should be directly responsible to the head teacher.

CO-OPERATION WITH THE PARENTS should be encouraged by every possible means ; for example, the head teacher and staff should be available at stated times for consultation, parent teacher associations should be formed and parents invited to see the school at work and to help so far as they can by their interest. As stated, in the Introduction, where the parents feel a deep concern and interest in school, these more formal aids will become less necessary.

## 6

### (A) PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

Open space around the building should provide gardens for enjoyment, for biological work, for the production of flowers and vegetables, and, most important of all, for the children's own gardening ; grass and asphalt for playing fields ; and equipment, not only for organised games, but for physical exercise and for the enjoyment which comes from climbing, swinging and paddling. For all these needs there should be ample space in proportion to the size of the school.

The Junior School should be housed in a building especially designed to fulfil its purpose. The building should be thought of as a social centre, in which children can work freely and feel at home. It should be light and airy, with one-storey rooms opening out on to a paved and shaded space to allow for open-air classes when the weather permits.

In particular we make the following recommendations :—

- (1) Each class should have as its home a spacious room, or rooms, with alcoves or small rooms as annexes for work-

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shop, library, or club, where active work can be in progress without disturbing other classes.

- (2) The assembly hall, provided with a stage, should be large enough for the comfortable gathering of the whole school and visitors.
- (3) (a) A music room, or rooms, should be situated so as not to disturb other work.  
(b) A craft room and workshop should be fully equipped for the crafts undertaken and should contain sinks with water laid on, and heating appliances.
- (4) A gymnasium, equipped with suitable apparatus, should have easy access to showers and cloakrooms.
- (5) The cloakrooms should be either attached to each classroom or within an easy distance and approached by closed corridors for inclement weather. They should be provided with washing facilities including hot water, lavatories and drying rooms. Metal clothes pegs should be a little apart to avoid crowding and infection.
- (6) The domestic unit should include a well-equipped dining-room, kitchen, scullery, store rooms and accommodation for the domestic staff.
- (7) There should be a Head Teacher's room with a Secretary's Office and stockrooms adjacent to it, a Staff Common Room with its own cloakroom, a visitors' and parents' room, a matron's room and a medical room with a waiting room as a separate unit.

The building and garden should be designed by experts, and in such a way that, if it is impossible to provide all the rooms here suggested, they could be added later. A five-, seven- or ten-year plan should make it possible for all the outmoded schools to be demolished and rebuilt on modern lines.



In addition to the main buildings there should be :—

- (1) A hostel for children with unsuitable homes, or whose parents are abroad.
- (2) Holiday "camps" in the country for town children.
- (3) A holiday home in the town for country children.

### (B) EQUIPMENT

FURNITURE for class rooms should be durable and of a kind which is easily moved, stacked and cleaned. It should provide a working place for each child and a place in which to keep his own possessions ; one or two large tables to each class for group work and exhibitions ; cupboards accessible to children and others for stock and for the teacher's use ; bookshelves ; a carpenter's bench. There should be a sink with water laid on and plugs for radio. Other equipment should include a portable radio, an epidiascope, a gramophone, to be shared by the school, and tools necessary for general activity, especially those for carpentry, cooking and gardening.

BOOKS. Each class should have a fiction library to supply a stock of reading matter suited to a variety of tastes, and reference books should be available for the class. There should be a library for the school as a whole, housed in a special room. Full use should be made of the public libraries services both by individuals and by class tickets by means of which some authorities allow a number of books to be borrowed by the term. There has been some development of children's rooms in Public Libraries. We would encourage this co-ordination and liaison with Public Libraries.

FLOORING should be of material that is easily cleaned but is suitable for floor activities.

WALLS should provide space for exhibitions of all kinds.

## THE PRESENT HINDRANCES TO THE WORK OF THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

THE SIZE OF CLASSES. Where the number of children in a class exceeds twenty-five, it is not possible for individual work to be carried out with sufficient guidance and help from the teacher. Group work necessitating different contributions by individuals, expeditions and reference work, can only be effective and without undue strain on the teacher in classes of this size. Nor can the teacher be expected to have the general care and welfare of more than twenty-five children, or keep adequate records of their work and progress.

STAFFING. In most Junior Schools the number of staff corresponds to the number of classes so that in the case of illness or emergency there is no one free to take over a class and there are no free periods for staff, as there are in secondary schools. There is little or no help on the domestic and secretarial side (see suggestions under "Internal Organisation").

SALARY AND STATUS. The fact that the existing scales of salary have differed for different types of school may have adversely affected the status of staff in schools such as the Junior School, where the appropriate scale has been lower than in others, and may have narrowed the field for the recruitment of staff for these schools. There are still cases where the Junior School is under the direct guidance of people with no experience and little knowledge of children of this age.

PHYSICAL CONDITIONS. Formerly the Junior School has been built and equipped to carry out the work conceived mainly as instruction from the teacher and passive reception



from the children. Class rooms should be thought of and equipped as work rooms adaptable for many different kinds of activities. Playgrounds are asphalt spaces on which the children may be turned out for a breath of air for short periods. They possess no equipment on which children may try physical skill, there is seldom anywhere to sit or any place for gardening and the keeping of living creatures. Too often cloakrooms and lavatories are such that they are not conducive to essential training in good physical habits. The accommodation for meals is often non-existent, or involves using the assembly hall or any other available space. Requisition allowances have in the past been less for Junior Schools than for other age groups, and because they have been less, they have been inadequate.

It is difficult to carry out the work of the Junior School on vital and progressive lines under such conditions. The school must be planned to meet the needs of the child at the junior stage as carefully as it has been for the nursery school child and the post-Junior pupil. The living conditions of many children in their homes, both in town and country, have vitiated the training given at school in good physical habits and sound moral attitudes. Until the physical and social conditions of many sections of the community have improved the schools must always bear in mind these difficulties and make attempts to counteract them. Particular attention must be paid to gaining the co-operation of parents. There must also be co-operation between all the people and agencies concerned with the welfare of the children.

Often conditions which have obtained in the past have thwarted the work of the young teacher emerging from a training where he or she came to appreciate the progressive approach to work through children's own interests, and the social life of the community in which they live. There needs to be sympathy for younger staff, on the part of the authorities;

they should be left to take the initiative wherever possible and allowed to experiment and to make the inevitable mistakes which come from inexperience, provided the children's welfare does not suffer. One of the hindrances is sometimes found in the treatment meted out to teachers (Assistants and Heads) by the external authority. The sympathetic co-operation of all officials who contact teachers is an urgent need and there should be frequent opportunity for them to gain a real understanding of the conditions in the schools.

It must be realised that "living, like virtue, is its own reward" that is, fullest living at a particular stage is the best preparation for the next stage of life. This implies that the child in his Junior School should not be working on material because it may be useful later, but rather because he appreciates its present purpose for himself and his fellows. The selection of children for various types of post-Junior education by means of suitable tests and cumulative records in the place of Special Place examinations should do much to correct the traditional outlook where the main concern was rigid standards in the formal skills and often very little else.

## 8

### THE TRAINING OF TEACHERS

In order to prepare the teachers for their task in the Junior Schools of the future their training must be seen in the light of the reciprocal needs of children and of society, and we suggest that it should be based on the following fundamental principles.

Firstly, students should come to understand the social environment of Junior children in order to educe their education out of their experiences. The study of individual child psychology has in the past failed to recognise the



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extent to which children's behaviour is determined by the particular pattern of life in which they have been brought up. The student in training should make first-hand studies not only of children as individuals but also of children in all their social relationships. While the whole range of development from birth to maturity should be studied, observation within their own environment of children of the pre-adolescent stage should form the subject of carefully directed field observation, followed up by discussion and reading.

Nor is recorded observation and study enough. Thorough understanding of children can only be achieved by participating in their activities. Students should share the experience of children outside school, in their homes, in play centres, in nurseries; they should help to take them on expeditions and to camps. A thorough grasp of the biological, psychological and social inheritance of children cannot be acquired through theoretical study or by working with them in one setting only, such as the school.

Secondly, in the course of this experience the student will discover the skills needed by the child when he is living in the community. Moreover students must themselves obtain mastery of the common skills if they are to be fully developed as individuals and as members of the community. These skills include language, number, such visual and auditory training as is needed for understanding the film and the wireless, familiarity with tools for work in wood, clay, textiles, cookery, gardening and a simple scientific technology.

Thirdly, and of essential importance, is the training for teaching in the school situation itself. Though the content of the curriculum and the methods of teaching must emerge from the kind of understanding of children which we have indicated, guided training in the wide varieties of technique necessary for teaching skills to Juniors and educating them

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according to their individual capacities is essential. We would emphasise two points only:—

- (1) That training to be effective requires good suitable Schools working in close co-operation with the purposes and knowledge of the Training College, Training Centre, People's College, or whatever institutions may be established in the future.
- (2) That the best sort of people to train students are those who are themselves experienced and gifted teachers, aware of the principles on which their teaching is based, and capable of interpreting them to others. We would add that longer periods of school experience, under more normal conditions than are often possible at present, are most desirable.

Fourthly, teachers in training must be willing to devote themselves to their vocation in the same eager spirit of adventure as they will encounter in the children, sharing as well as guiding the child's zeal for learning and his vital curiosity in the world around him. This would certainly mean a readjustment of the personal outlook of a large number of young teachers. They must be willing to free themselves from the shibboleths of the past and to see their work with children as an important part of the social reconstruction which faces the next generation. It is essential for teachers themselves to possess a happy personal and social adjustment so that they attain a gaiety of spirit which helps to make their contacts with the young essentially creative in nature. They need a philosophy of life as well as philosophy of education. Their vocational training must therefore include their personal development, and a great deal of research is needed in methods of guiding young men and women between the ages of 18 and 21. Much should be left to the initiative of young people themselves but wise unobtrusive guidance is essential. They need opportunities of discussing with the



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help of expert trained minds problems in ethics, religion, philosophy, social reconstruction and international affairs. Students who are willing to co-operate in the self discipline of dance, dramatic production, choral and instrumental music are also educating themselves for their future vocation. A wide range of societies controlled and organised through committees of students who know how to utilise the advice and help of maturer minds is a valuable part of training and it is our belief that those activities should be co-educational.

What kind of institution then is needed for the vocational training of teachers? The purpose of education being to develop the child as an individual and as a member of the community, the same principle should guide us in our conception of the best type of training institution. Neither the universities nor the training colleges as at present constituted seem to provide the full background and opportunities we have in mind. We need a community in direct reciprocal relationship with society. Seclusion is out of the question. Students should not be segregated from life or from one another. Their culture should be wide, not purely academic; their intellectual and æsthetic development fostered by methods quite different from the typical university lecture courses. In Scheme A of the McNair Report we have the framework for the reorganisation of training colleges which will break down isolation, give opportunities for the wide development of educational research and provide both a liberal education of the young adults whom they are training and a professional curriculum for the specific needs of primary and secondary school. The great advantage of such a scheme would be the provision of a common social and intellectual life for students of both sexes preparing for various professions. It would promote social unity and understanding in place of the isolation and narrowness of our present methods. The minimum period of such training would be three years.

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We wish to add a word concerning the recruitment and selection of teachers. The most urgent need in the Junior School is the reduction in the size of classes. Without this the nature of the education we have described cannot possibly materialise. The present situation demands drastic remedy by a rapid increase in the number of teachers especially if the spirit of young teachers going into schools is not to be exhausted and embittered. We would put in a special plea that the Junior School shall not be neglected while attention is diverted to the raising of the school leaving age and the enormous increase of teachers for this purpose. In order to meet the emergency of the immediate future, we must recognise that there will have to be other avenues of approach to the teaching profession than the traditional one of the secondary school and school certificate. Qualities of character, a sense of social purpose, a sense of adventure, and a happy liberal spirit are needed. We suggest that the vocational training we have briefly described can be adapted to the thousands of less academically trained candidates that we shall have to recruit for the teaching profession in the immediate future.

## 9

### RESEARCH

Much needs to be done to discover the following data.

- (1) The most suitable age and stage for teaching skills :—
  - (a) "The formal tools of learning," i.e. reading, writing and mathematics.
  - (b) Other skills, i.e., cookery has normally been left to the post-Junior stage, but such experience as there has been points to its advantages for junior children.



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Through it they get a practical use of weighing and measuring, and discover the physical and chemical reactions of various materials, which is an excellent introduction to science at a later age. It satisfies their demand to be useful.

- (2) Methods of teaching and discovery.—The use of environmental studies of many kinds as a means of helping the children to discover facts by their own experience and observation.
- (3) The nature of the interests of children at the Junior School stage, scientific, linguistic, dramatic; the part that phantasy plays in their thought; how far their social background is reflected in their interests; etc.
- (4) The social relationships of children within their own neighbourhood.
- (5) Types of equipment and apparatus most suitable for the work in Junior School. There is much yet to be done in using various types of mechanical aid, such as cinema, radio and television.
- (6) Books.—The production of books for juniors needs a thorough study. Often text books are unsuitable and for older backward readers the contents of books within their ability has little interest for them.
- (7) Records.—If cumulative records are to have their proper place in indicating a picture of the whole child and his progress, much experiment needs to be done to discover what are the minimum and essential observations to record, and the form in which it is most valuable to record them. Also records of activities, indicating their value and their difficulty, are essential if the work is to develop and progress.
- (8) Methods of selection of children for the different types of post-Junior education.

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## THE JUNIOR SCHOOL

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### SECTIONS

- I The Social Setting of the Junior School.
- II The Age Range, Size of School and Size of Classes.
- III The Link with Pre-Junior and Post-Junior Schools.
- IV The Curriculum of the Junior School.
- V Internal Organisation.
- VI (a) Physical Environment.  
(b) Equipment.
- VII The Present Hindrances to the Work of the Junior School.
- VIII The Training of Junior School Teachers.
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